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Investigation of Continuous Self-Improvement, Worry, Assertive, Aggressive, & Passive Interaction Styles

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Background

Competitive Greatness

John R. Wooden's father shared two principles which were a major influence for his life: (1) "Don't try to be better than someone else, and (2) Always try to be the best you can be" (Wooden & Carty, 2005, p. 17). The first principle was a reminder that a successful life does not find peace of mind by comparing one's self to others. There is an interconnection between the second principle and Wooden's competitive greatness construct (CG). The definition of CG: "Be at your best when your best is needed. Enjoyment of a difficult challenge" (Wooden & Carty, 2005, p. 90).

Competitive greatness is linked to continuous self-improvement. By making the focus of life primarily on individual growth and development, there are endless opportunities to expand our skills and abilities. In Wooden's words: "We don't have to be superstars or win championships to reach competitive greatness. All we have to do is learn to rise to every occasion, give your best effort and make those around us better as we do it. It's not about winning. It's about learning to give all we have to give" (Wooden & Carty, 2005, p. 91).

Wooden created a pyramid of success as guide to the continuous self-improvement process. In his books, Wooden provides explanations for each of the 15 building blocks. Key words for each block are: (1) hard work and planning (Industriousness), (2) enjoyment (Enthusiasm), (3) mutual esteem & devotion (Friendship), (4) beneficial work (Cooperation), (5) self-respect (Loyalty), (6) discipline (Self-Control), (7) observation & open-mindedness (Alertness), (8) decisions & action (Initiative), (9) realistic goals (Intentness), (10) physical, mental, moral, & spiritual (Condition), (11) timing & performance (Skill), (12) eagerness & sacrifice (Team Spirit), (13) true to self (Poise), (14) respect without fear (Confidence), and (15) loving a difficult challenge (Competitive Greatness).



Background (cont'd)

Continuous Self-Improvement (CSI)

In the academic environment, Wooden's competitive greatness can be linked to Continuous Self-Improvement (CSI). By focusing on individual growth and development, there are endless opportunities to expand our skills and abilities. Meyer's 10-80-10 principle estimates that 10 percent are in "... relentless pursuit of improvement" or CSI. A CSI nursing student functions at an exceptional level of engagement, a deeper learning processing of material from textbook readings and lecture presentations. Using an intrinsic reward system, they internalize content and concepts and continuously apply them in new, unique ways. These students appear to feel the satisfaction and receive the validation they are going to be excellent nurses. Not only do they understand the scientific and theoretical aspects of nursing, but they also demonstrate the art and caring nature of an excellent and compassionate nurse.

Assertive, Aggressive, & Passive

Hedlund & Lindquist (1984, 379) report:

An original pool of 87 items was reduced to 30 items, which loaded on the three principal factors of aggression, assertion, and passivity. A second sample of 200 undergraduates was tested on the 30-item instrument, and the factor solution was confirmed by a third analysis carried out on a new sample of 275 more heterogeneous individuals. Satisfactory reliability and consistency were demonstrated. Evidence for convergent and discriminant validity was established using a multi-behavior-multi-method matrix for all three scales on four types of measures: personality measures, taped role-play ratings, peer ratings, and global self ratings. All of the scales correlated negatively with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

There are 10 questions for the passive, aggressive, and assertive scales. Review Table 1 (Hedlund & Lindquist, 1984, pp. 382-384). On page 384 of the table under aggressive, there are two number 29 questions. The second question labeled 29 is actually 26.

Big Five Personality Factors

According to Meyer et al. (1990, p. 487), The 16-item instrument emerged from factor analysis of a large number of items and was found to possess high internal consistency and good test-retest reliability. The questionnaire correlates predictably with several psychological measures reasonably related to worry, and does not correlate with other measures more remote to the construct. Responses to the questionnaire are not influenced by social desirability.

The questionnaire has 16 items (reverse scoring items: 1, 3, 8, 10, 11). Range of scores is 16-80 (High Worry, 60-80; Moderate Worry, 40-59; Low Worry, 16-39).

Methods

The participants in this educational intervention were 60 BSN students. The instrumentation: CG/CSI and team spirit were measured from the Wooden Pyramid of Success Questionnaire (Hilty, 2017). Assertive, Aggressive, and Passive behavior measured by the Personal Assertion Analysis (PAA; Hedlund & Lindquist, 1984). Meyer's et al. (1990) 16-item Penn State Worry Questionnaire measured the worry construct.

Hypothesis 1: Using SPSS 25 independent t-test, there will be a difference between students scoring high and moderate-low groups on the CG/CSI construct as measured by team spirit, assertive, aggressive, passive, and worry scales.

Methods (Cont'd)

Hypothesis 2: Using SPSS 25 correlational analysis, it was hypothesized that a positive correlation coefficient would be found between the CQ/CSI, team spirit, and assertiveness scales. It was also hypothesized that a negative correlation coefficient would be found between the CQ/CSI, team spirit, assertiveness scales when compared with aggressive, passive, and worry scales. Hypothesis 3: Using multiple regression with CG/CSI as the dependent variable and team spirit and assertive scales as predictor variables, the outcome will be significantly different from zero.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There was a significant difference between students scoring high and moderate-low groups on the CG/CSI construct as measured by the Team Spirit ($p=.001$) and Assertive ($p=.008$). Aggressive ($p>.05$), Passive ($p>.05$), and Worry ($p>.05$) scales.

Hypothesis 2: There was a significant positive correlational coefficient among CG/CSI and Team Spirit ($r=.668$, $p=.001$), Aggressive ($r=-.204$, $p>.05$), Assertive ($r=.367$, $p=.004$), Passive ($r=-.234$, $p>.05$), and Worry ($r=-.162$, $p>.05$).

Hypothesis 3: Using SPSS 25 multiple regression with CG/CSI as the dependent variable and Team Spirit and Assertive as the predictor variables, the findings were significantly different ($F(2,57) = 28.209$, $R = .705$, $R\text{-squared} = .497$, $p=.001$). Both Team Spirit ($p=.001$) and Assertive ($p=.019$) were significant predictors of CG/CSI.

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